

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 INR-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 SP-02 EA-06 PRS-01 SAJ-01 IO-03 /047 W

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P 272320Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7954

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 4580

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MX

SUBJECT: SOUTH VIETNAMESE (PRS) AMBASSADOR'S VISIT WITH
PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA

REF MEXICO 4551, MEXICO 4548

1. UNDER SECRETARY OF INTERIOR, FERNANDO GUTIERREZ BARRIOS (THE OTHER RIGHT HAND MAN AND "HOMBRE DE CONFIANZA" OF THE PRESIDENT) ASKED TO SEE ME URGENTLY, BEING WILLING TO COME TO THE EMBASSY CHANCERY (FOR THE FIRST TIME) FOR THIS PURPOSE. HE SAID HE CAME ON SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT WHO WAS CONCERNED THAT I HAD MENTIONED THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR'S VISIT TO FAUSTO ZAPATA YESTERDAY (EMBTel 4551). HE SAID HE PRESUMED THAT I WAS AWARE THAT WHILE THE PRESS HAD ATTEMPTED TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE AMBASSADOR WAS TRAVELLING AS PART OF THE PARTY OF PRESIDENT AND MRS. ECHEVERRIA, THIS WAS AN EXAGGERATION. THE PRESIDENT WAS UNABLE TO RECEIVE THE AMBASSADOR IN MEXICO CITY AS HE WAS AWAY FOR AN EXTENDED TRIP IN THE INTERIOR. AND IT WAS URGENT THAT HE SAW HIM IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WHICH HAD TO BE COORDINATED WITH SAIGON/HANOI TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED ON MONDAY. FOR THIS REASON THE PRESIDENT HAD DECIDED TO RECEIVE HIM AT PUERTO VALLARTA DURING THE COURSE OF HIS TOUR OF THAT REGION. GUTIERREZ BARRIOS FLEW THE AMBASSADOR AND HIS AIDES UP TO GUADALAJARA

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AND THEN PUERTO VALLARTA, WHERE THEY SAW THE PRESIDENT AND

THEN THE VIETNAMESE PARTY WAS FLOWN BACK IN A SEPARATE PLANE. GUTIERREZ BARRIOS SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT PRIVATELY ADMONISHED THE VIETNAMESE REGARDING NON-INTERVENTION IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE SPECIFICALLY STATED THESE PRINCIPLES, CONTRARY TO THE SIMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE VIETNAMESE HAD PROPOSED. THE PRESIDENT HAD ALSO PREVIOUSLY MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS AS TO MEXICAN DEVOTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS, FREEDOM OF SPEECH, PUBLICATION, ELECTIONS, ETC. (EMBTel 4548).

2. THE PRESIDENT HOPED I WOULD USE THIS BACKGROUND INFORMATION IN PLACING THE MATTER IN PERSPECTIVE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, EMPHASIZING THE PRESS HAD EXAGGERATED HIS GESTURE TOWARDS THE VIETNAMESE. I THANKED HIM COURTEOUSLY FOR THIS MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND POINTED OUT THE FACT THAT I HAD RECEIVED NO INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE BUT HAD MERELY TAKEN IT UPON MYSELF TO OBSERVE THAT ECHEVERRIA'S HOSTING OF THE VIETNAMESE MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED AT HOME AS AN EXCESSIVE GESTURE TOWARDS THE PRG AT THIS MOMENT. GUTIERREZ BARRIOS AGREED ENTIRELY AND POINTED OUT THAT THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WAS SOMETHING WHICH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE USG THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS AND WE HAD NOT ANY OBJECTIONS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMUNISTS, AMBASSADORS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MEXICO04580
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750185-0432
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750517/aaaaapai.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MEXICO 4551, 75 MEXICO 4548
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <11 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH VIETNAMESE (PRS) AMBASSADOR'S VISIT WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA
TAGS: PFOR, MX, VS, (ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ, LUIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006